## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A improved connection shaping technique is disclosed, whereby at least one
5 high-priority "preemptive" service flow is initiated at a customer entity in order to limit
or restrict the effective usable bandwidth on a particular line or connection. According
to at least one embodiment, a preempt data parcel corresponds to a data parcel which
includes non-meaningful data. When the preempt cells are received at the ingress port
of the communication line, the preempt cells may be identified as non-meaningful data
10 parcels, and may be discarded in accordance with conventional protocols.